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AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

VOLUME 22 SAN FRANCISCO, MAY, 1940 NUMBER 5

March Field Trip

The March field trip was to the East Bay Regional Park above the city of Berkeley. The sun dissipated a light fog early and the remainder of the day left no doubt that spring had arrived. This park lies in a canyon which also contains a C. C. C. camp. Probably this latter fact accounted for the numerous Crested Jays present as they obtain a bountiful living around human habitations. The trees here consist principally of willows and eucalypti, the latter being in the greater abundance but apparently sheltering scarcely any bird life except flickers. Among the willows Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Lutescent and Audubon Warblers, and hummingbirds were the most numerous species. Both the Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Lutescent Warblers were singing constantly.

The complete list of thirty-five birds is as follows:

Red-tailed Hawk	Bush-tit	Purple Finch
Marsh Hawk	Wren-tit	House Finch
Quail	Vigors Wren	Pine Siskin
Anna Hummingbird	Thrasher	Green-backed Goldfinch
Allen Hummingbird	Robin	Spotted Towhee
Red-shafted Flicker	Hermit Thrush	Brown Towhee
Hairy Woodpecker	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Junco
Willow Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Black Phoebe	Hutton Vireo	Nuttall Sparrow
Crested Jay	Lutescent Warbler	Fox Sparrow
California Jay	Audubon Warbler	Song Sparrow
Titmouse	Pileolated Warbler	

Eighteen members attended, as follows: Messrs. and Mesdames Dunshee, Stephens; Mrs. Courtright; Misses Berg, Blake, Cohen, Dunshee, Fenwick, Kennedy, MacIver, Sterne, Werner, Yeamans; Messrs. Greenhood, Kirker and Power; and five guests.

Albert B. Stephens, Historian.

A Word for Predators

On the February field trip a visitor stated that there was a campaign in Utah to exterminate both the Swainson and the Cooper Hawks. Nothing we said could convince her that perhaps she was mistaken, at least in regard to the Swainson Hawk. We endeavored to persuade her to our view that no hawk or any other bird should be exterminated. She insisted that stomach analyses had proved that both these hawks were found to be very destructive to other birds.

The following information will be of interest to our members who heard this discussion:

In reply to a letter of mine, C. W. Lockerbie of the Audubon Society of Utah states that he knows nothing of such a campaign and furthermore that the above-mentioned society would not sponsor any such action but would indeed protest against it.

In "The Hawks of North America," by John Bichard May, appears the following: "The Swainson Hawk destroys great quantities of field mice, gophers and ground squirrels as well as grasshoppers and other lowly but decidedly injurious creatures, so that *it is one of our most beneficial Hawks and it should be given complete protection at all times.*

"The Cooper Hawk, when common, may be extremely destructive to small birds, young poultry and game birds."

In *Bird-Lore*, January-February 1940 issue, P. A. Taverner has a most interesting article on "Predators—Human and Wild," from which the following is taken: "That predation is necessary to the well-being of wildlife is often regarded as one of those highly speculative theories in which detached scientists like to indulge but which common sense rejects.

"The horse could never have developed its speed without the wolf at its heels and the fear of death in its heart, nor the Grouse its camouflage and quick reactions without the vital threat of the Hawk in the air. Lacking predatory pressure, all organisms eventually deteriorate, as is plainly demonstrated by the flightless birds and other degenerate forms found on many oceanic islands where predation is absent.

"No stockman can keep up, much less improve, the standards of his herds without the constant roguing of its ranks. . . . What the stock breeder does constantly, the predator does unconsciously, taking the weak, the halt, and those below par in much greater proportion than the strong and agile. . . . Under certain abnormal conditions there may be such a thing as over-predation that fails to stop with the weaklings and makes inroads upon the strong; but all successful races can safely withstand the normal attacks of their natural enemies under the conditions through which they were evolved and have persisted. Were it otherwise, *ipso facto*, they could not have originated or survived to date."

L. A. S.

April Field Trip

The April field trip was taken this year on the fourteenth to Arroyo Mocho in the southeastern part of Alameda County near Livermore. A beautiful day, tempered to just the right degree by a wind fresh off the first seasonal fog, greeted the party as it alighted from the bus, which was an innovation for us. The trip was to be an experiment to determine the feasibility of outings in a common conveyor to more distant and varied habitats. Judging by the comments of those attending, I am sure this method is and will continue to be entirely successful and enjoyable.

Our arrival at McCoy's Ranch coincided with that of a nice Yellow-breasted Chat, our largest and perhaps most interesting Warbler. Beautiful but elusive, this willow-dweller led many of the party a merry chase before divulging even the fleetest glimpses of himself. The usual quotas of land birds were so vociferously vying for the attentions of the birders that it was only by conscious effort that one could pick out individual species from the chorus. Strikingly beautiful Bullock Orioles flashing in the sun demanded and received their full share of attention. Less bright but equally as demanding with their vigorous songs were the numerous House Wrens. Trim and querulous little Blue-gray Gnatcatchers contested the claims of the still smaller Bush-tits to the feeding rights on the tips of the branches, while overhead Violet-green Swallows and a pair of Vaux Swifts hawked about. Domestic duties were not being neglected in the joy of the morning sun, you may be sure. Nests of Green-backed Goldfinches, Anna Hummingbirds, Bush-tits, House Wrens and Plain Titmice at the ranch all attested the fact. Nor were the birds the only attraction. Flowers of many hues and varieties provided no small part of the enjoyment for those on the spot. Complacent little Horned Toads and other lizards as well as the usual varied collection of insects were also given their due share of attention.

That winter had not long left was indicated by the presence of such winter visitors as Audubon Warblers, Cedar Waxwings and Gambel Sparrows.

Lunch was eaten on a still lush carpet of grass by the crystal clear stream passing through the ranch. Following this hour of welcome relaxation the party moved upstream to the foot of the winding grade leading to Mt. Hamilton. There Phainopeplas, the feature of the trip, immediately captivated the party with their striking dress of black and white as they flashed about among the oaks. Several were seen, but their activity circumvented any accurate count. Probably not more than six were actually present. Western Bluebirds contrasted strongly with the Peps, and a single Say Phoebe surprised us sitting on a fence near a female Oriole which was endeavoring to tease away a piece of string for her nest. The Kingbirds noted there, as well as the Ash-throated Flycatchers observed on a not otherwise too successful side jaunt, added nicely to a handsome set of flycatchers for the day. Several entirely too elusive and exasperting little Sparrows were flushed from time to time in the Artemesia bushes on the steep hillsides, which left doubt as to their real identity. They may have been Rufous-crowned or Lincoln Sparrows. The latter, however, was definitely identified at two other points on the trip.

So ended a most interesting trip made possible through the use of a bus, which method I for one advocate as a means to more enjoyable birding by our organization. May I urge those not able to be on this trip to try the next? It was really fun.

The following list of seventy species was noted for the day:

Mallard
Turkey Vulture
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Golden Eagle
Sparrow Hawk
Valley Quail
Killdeer
Band-tailed Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Vaux Swift
Allen Hummingbird
Anna Hummingbird
Red-shafted Flicker
California Woodpecker
Lewis Woodpecker
Willow Woodpecker
Nuttall Woodpecker
Western Kingbird
Ash-throated Flycatcher
Black Phoebe
Say Phoebe
Western Flycatcher
Horned Lark
Violet-green Swallow
Barn Swallow
Cliff Swallow
California Jay
Crested Jay
Crow
Plain Titmouse
Bush-tit
Slender-billed Nuthatch
House Wren
Vigors Wren
Mockingbird
California Thrasher
Western Bluebird
Western Gnatcatcher
Pipit
Cedar Waxwing
Phainopepla
Shrike
Warbling Vireo
Lutescent Warbler
Myrtle Warbler
Audubon Warbler
Chat
Pileolated Warbler
English Sparrow
Meadowlark
Red-winged Blackbird
Bullock Oriole
Brewer Blackbird
Black-headed Grosbeak
Lazuli Bunting
Purple Finch
House Finch
Willow Goldfinch
Green-backed Goldfinch
Lawrence Goldfinch
Brown Towhee
Lark Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Junco
Chipping Sparrow
Gambel Sparrow
Golden-crowned Sparrow
Lincoln Sparrow
Song Sparrow

Twenty-five members attended, as follows: Messrs. and Mesdames Millard, Stephens; Mesdames Enid K. Austin, Courtright, Kelly, Kibbe, Thomas; Misses Berg, Blake, Cohen, Kennedy, MacIver, Papina, Paroni, Roscoe, Sterne, Werner; Messrs. Bolander, Greenhood, Kirker, Myer, Pike and Webb; and twelve guests.

Gordon Bolander, Leader and Historian.

Audubon Notes

May Meeting: The regular meeting will be held on Thursday, the 16th, at 8 p. m., in the Auditorium of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Building, 245 Market Street, San Francisco, at 8 p. m.

The speaker of the evening will be Mr. Roger Tory Peterson, Educational

Director of the National Association of Audubon Societies, whose subject will be "Birding Across the Continent." The lecture will be illustrated with color slides and motion pictures.

Please note change of date and place of meeting.

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May Field Trip will be on Sunday, the 12th, to Saint Mary's, Contra Costa County. Take the Sacramento Northern train at 8:15 a. m. from San Francisco Terminal, track 6, and purchase round-trip ticket, 75c. Train leaves Saint Mary's at 4:22 p. m. Members driving meet the party at Saint Mary's Station at 9 a. m. Bring luncheon. Leader, Arthur Myer.

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April Meeting: The 272nd regular meeting was held on the 11th in the Ferry Building, with seventy members and guests present. President B. K. Dunshee presided.

Mr. J. W. Stacey of San Francisco was elected to membership.

The following observations were reported:

Mrs. Chas. F. Austin: Larkspur, Black-headed Grosbeak, April 9th.

Harold Axtell: Marina, San Francisco, first year Western Gull banded "RSB" right leg at Haystack Rock, Oregon, seen March 28th.

Mrs. Kelly: The Bushtits in Mrs. Scott's garden, which were feeding young February 7th, began cleaning up the nest on the 13th and the second brood left the nest either the 18th or 19th of March, and on the 28th the pair started again to repair the nest, and on the 8th of April were still about. Bay Farm Island, two each Black and Ruddy Turnstones; Leslie Salt Works, 200± Avocets, some in summer plumage; Dumbarton Bridge, many Shovellers, 200± Eared Grebes; Lake Merced, one Cliff Swallow, March 9th; Garber Park, Berkeley, six Lutescent Warblers, March 13th; Phoenix Lake, Marin County, one male and two female Hooded Mergansers, March 31st; Alameda, young Allen Hummingbird left nest on the 30th and the second young on 31st; Bay Farm Island, six Knots, hundreds of Black-bellied Plovers, hundreds of Dowitchers and a few Hudsonian Curlews, April 3rd; Alameda, Black-throated Gray Warbler singing, April 11th.

Harold Kirker: Bolinas Lagoon, 50+ Red-breasted Mergansers, four Caspian Terns; Inverness, Ring-necked Pheasant, six Slender-billed nuthatches, April 6th: Castle Rock, Pine Canyon, Duck Hawk nest with three eggs, Swainson Hawk, Ash-throated Flycatcher nesting, Warbling Vireo nesting, Townsend Warbler, Pileolated Warbler, Western Gnatcatcher, 12 Bullock Orioles, Lazuli Bunting, Say Phoebe (at least six), White-throated Swift, April 21st.

The evening's program was the showing by Mr. Andrew Shirra Gibb of some very interesting motion pictures in color, particularly of Pigeon Guillemots and Black Oystercatchers at Point Lobos, Ruddy Ducks at Del Monte, Black Brant at Tomales, and Cliff Swallows gathering mud from a small pool and building their nests at Carmel Mission.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....Mr. B. K. Dunshee....Room 714, 245 Market St., San Francisco

Corresponding Secretary.....Mr. Joseph J. Webb.....519 California St., San Francisco

Treasurer.....Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....1695 Filbert St., San Francisco

Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 P. M., Ferry Building.

Address Bulletin correspondence to Mrs. A. B. Stephens, Editor, 1695 Filbert St., San Francisco.

Membership dues, payable January 1st, $3.00 per year.

Student memberships, $1.50 per year. Life memberships, $50.00.

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.